



## **RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY**

**MAY 2021**

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## 1. Summary

This Recruitment and Selection Policy has been produced in line with the DFE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education. As the DFE Guidance states:

*'It is vital that schools and colleges create a culture of safe recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children.'*

This policy aims to ensure both safe and fair recruitment and selection is conducted at all times. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in recruitment and selection and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people. The Aspire Schools Trust ("AST" or the "Trust") is also committed to ensuring that recruitment and selection is undertaken in a fair and transparent way and that appointments are based on the candidate judged to be most suitable, securing the position.

## 2. Recruitment and selection policy statement

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks along with other relevant employment checks.

The Trust is committed to attracting, selecting and retaining employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing a valuable service. A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job is critical to the Trust's performance and fundamental to the delivery of a high quality service within each of its schools.

## 3. Purpose

To ensure the recruitment of both permanent and fixed-term staff (including voluntary) is conducted in a fair, effective and economic manner.

To achieve this purpose, those that are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all internal and external applicants.

## 4. Scope

This policy applies to all the Trust employees and governors responsible for, and involved in, recruitment and selection of all staff. Where a Headteacher is being appointed, the CEO and Board of Trustees will consult with appropriate external consultants regarding the recruitment process.

The ultimate responsibility for recruitment and selection lies with the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees has delegated the responsibility for the appointment of staff to the CEO.

## 5. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of this policy are to:

- ensure that the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people takes place at each stage of the process.
- ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the appointment of all staff within the Trust.

- ensure all relevant equal opportunities legislation is adhered to and that appointees are not discriminated against on the grounds of any protected characteristic – as identified in the Equality Act 2010.
- ensure the most cost effective use is made of resources in the recruitment and selection process.

## 6. Principles

The following principles are encompassed in this policy:

- All applicants will receive fair treatment and a high quality service
- The job description and person specification are essential tools and will be used throughout the process
- Employees will be recruited on the knowledge, experience and skills needed for the job
- Selection will be carried out by a panel with at least two members but preferably with three. At least one panel member will have received Safer Recruitment training with regard to the recruitment and selection process (as recommended by the DfE), together with the requisite safeguarding training
- As an essential minimum, selection will be on the basis of a completed application form, shortlisting and interview
- Monitoring and evaluation are essential for assessing the effectiveness of the process
- All posts will normally be advertised
- The Equality Act 2010 makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.

## 7. Equal Opportunities

The Trust is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics. The Trust acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and therefore will ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy is the foundation for all its activities.

All vacant posts should be advertised to ensure equality of opportunity and encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. This will normally mean placing an advert externally. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient suitably qualified internal candidates, or staff are at risk of redundancy, vacancies may be advertised internally. Any internal recruitment process will follow the procedures set out in this policy.

## 8. Safer Recruitment – Recruitment and Selection Training

It is a requirement that at least one member of the interview panel has completed the Safer Recruitment Training successfully prior to the start of the recruitment process.

## 9. Pre-recruitment Process

### 9.1 Objective

The objective of the recruitment process is to attract, select and retain staff who will successfully and positively contribute to the future development of the school. The first experience an individual has is important. With this in mind, the Trust will endeavour to ensure that the experience is positive and that all those responsible for recruiting will:

- Leave a positive image with unsuccessful applicants

- Give successful applicants a clear understanding of the post and what is expected of them
- Reduce the risk of a bad selection decision that can be expensive and may cause line management problems in the future, or may not meet the school's commitment to safeguarding children and young people.

## **9.2 Process for advertising a vacancy**

Each Academy within the Trust will inform the Central HR Team when a vacancy arises. The Central HR Team will co-ordinate the recruitment process, advertise the vacancy and receive applications.

## **9.3 Application Form**

An Aspire Schools Trust standard application form will be used to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants.

## **9.4 Job Description and Person Specification**

An accurate job description is required for all posts. A person specification, which is a profile of the necessary requirements for the post, will be incorporated within the job description.

## **9.5 References**

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. References, where possible, will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee.

References will be sought on all shortlisted candidates, by the Central HR Team and, where possible, will be obtained before interview so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview.

## **10. Interviews**

The interview will usually take place at the school within the Trust where the vacancy has arisen. The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements, and explore their suitability to work with children and young people. The selection process for people who will work with children and young people will always include a face-to-face interview, even if there is only one candidate.

### **10.1 The Interview Panel**

A minimum of two interviewers will form the interviewing panel, but preferably three.

The members of the interview panel will:

- have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointments following discussion with the CEO;
- be appropriately trained, (one member of interview panel will have undertaken the Safer Recruitment Training).
- meet before the interviews to:
  - ⇒ reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing;
  - ⇒ consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each of those;
  - ⇒ agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

## 10.2 Scope of the Interview

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the interview panel will also explore:

- the candidate's attitude toward children and young people;
- his/her ability to support the school's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- gaps in the candidate's employment history;
- concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee; and,
- ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for an enhanced DBS check (if not already indicated on the application form) and safeguarding self-declaration.

If, for whatever reason, references are not obtained before the interview, the candidate will also be asked at interview if there is anything s/he wishes to declare/discuss in light of the questions that have been (or will be) put to his/her referees. (NB - It is vital that the references are obtained and scrutinised before a person's appointment is confirmed and before s/he starts work).

## 11. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre Appointment Checks

Following discussion with the CEO, an offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references
- verification of the candidate's identity
- verification of eligibility to work in the UK
- verification of qualifications
- verification of professional status where required e.g. GTC registration, QTS status (unless properly exempted), NPQH;
- a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure
- the receipt of a Fit to Teach certificate for teaching staff
- the receipt of a satisfactory health declaration for support staff
- a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- a satisfactory check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the Employer Access Online service;
- (for teaching posts) verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999); and,
- (for non-teaching posts) satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

The recruiting panel will inform the Central HR Team that an offer of appointment has been made via email [hr@aspire-school-trust.org](mailto:hr@aspire-school-trust.org). The Central HR Team will issue all documentation for an appointment and co-ordinate the appointment process.

The Central HR Team will liaise with the CEO, Headteacher and Leadership team in order to follow relevant DBS guidance if a Disclosure reveals information that a candidate has not disclosed in the course of the selection process.

All checks will be:

- confirmed in writing;

- documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to certain restrictions on the retention of information imposed by DBS and Data Protection regulations);
- recorded on the school's central record database; and,
- followed up, where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided.

Where:

- the candidate is found to be on the barred list or the PoCA List, or the DBS Disclosure shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or,
- an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his/her application; or,
- there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children,

The facts must be reported to the police and/or the DCSF Children's Safeguarding Operations Unit. The school will liaise with the LCSB (Local Children's Safeguarding Board) if this should be the case.

## **12. Post Appointment Induction**

There will be a standard induction programme for all staff, governors and other volunteers newly appointed, regardless of previous experience or location within the Trust.

All new members of staff will be given appropriate safeguarding and child protection training.

## **13. Continuing Awareness**

The following guidance (adapted from the DfE) should be considered throughout the working environment:

- It is vital that the measures described in this guidance are applied thoroughly whenever someone is recruited to work with children, but that must not be the end of the matter. Schools and FE institutions are safe environments for the great majority of children, and the vast majority of people who work with children have their safety and welfare at heart. We must not, however, be complacent. We know that some people seek access to children in order to abuse, and that abused children very often do not disclose the abuse at the time. We also know that some of the allegations of abuse made against staff are substantiated, and we continue to see a number of cases year on year in which teachers and other staff are convicted of criminal offences involving the abuse of children.
- It is crucial, therefore, that everyone working in a school (or any other setting providing for children) is aware of these issues, and the need to adopt ways of working and appropriate practice to help reduce allegations. It is equally important that everyone is able to raise concerns about what seems to be poor or unsafe practice by colleagues, and that those concerns, and concerns expressed by children, parents or others, are listened to and taken seriously.
- It will often be hard to give credence to concerns particularly if they are about a long serving and trusted colleague. Unfortunately those concerns will sometimes be true and it is important that they are taken seriously and not simply dismissed. Where concerns have not been taken seriously in the past, a person has been able to continue abusing children, sometimes for many years. It is vital, therefore, that all concerns are taken seriously and that where appropriate, action is taken in accordance with the procedures for dealing with allegations against education staff.